

Asheville Transit Commission Meeting
February 10, 2010
Minutes

Attendance:

Transit Commission (TC) Members: Hanna Raskin, Dave Erb, Tom Tomlin, Paul Van Heden, Kevin Jenkins, Georgia M. Shannon.

Staff: Ken Putnam, Mariate Echeverry, Edna Johnson, Yuri Koslen, Janet GeorgeMurr, Diane Ruggiero, Martha McGlohon.

Community Members: Francesa Valiani, Kendall Weaver, Natalie Murdock, Marc Hunt, Stephen Eggett, Emily Davis.

4:30pm – Hanna Raskin opened the meeting

Agenda Amendments: Add under New Business: Proposed time change of TC meeting

- Tom Tomlin read the Explanation of Public Comment Standards and Opportunities.

Review of Minutes:

Corrections were as follows:

- Under New Transit Commission Member: add middle initial to Georgia M. Shannon; Correct spelling of Kevin Jenkins
- Under GPS/GLYMPSE: correct the statement by Paul Van Heden as follows: Paul stated that as long as Brett McCall is up front regarding the “profitability” of this program.
- Under New Business: remove the second “a February pass.”
- Under Weather Preparation: last sentence should read: “Mariate stated Transit’s contract with the Union will expire and First Transit will bring this up at negotiations.”
- Paul asked if the First Transit’s fees would change in accordance with the Union negotiations for fees. Mariate stated regardless what is negotiated with the Union; the fees with First Transit do not fluctuate. Edna stated that the Union has a separate contract for three years.
- Paul moved to approve minutes; Tom seconded the motion; and all voted in favor of approving the minutes with above corrections.

Welcome Public – Introductions and Pre-Meeting Public Comment:

- Hanna welcomed the public with an introduction of each member of the Transit Commission, staff and community. Hanna welcomed two of the newest members of the TC and the new members introduced themselves: Georgia M. Shannon retired from the VA two years ago; Kevin Jenkins takes the bus since he has MS with vision problems and has lived in Asheville since 2003. Hanna announced to the new members and public that the TC retreat on April 14, 2010 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Public Introductions:
 - Brett McCall to present the GPS/GLYMPSE.
 - Stephen Eggett – to support the GLYMPSE,
 - Kendall Weaver – from Hendersonville to support the GLYMPSE
 - Natalie Murdock – FBRMPO
 - Marc Hunt – member of the Greenway Commission. Mr. Hunt would like to see all of the master plans of bike, transit, greenway, to be integrated to expand with P&Z, river district to cooperate and combine the master plans as transit relates to bikes as related to greenways, etc. He also wants a GIS mapping overlay of the plans in order to see how the plans coordinate with each other.
 - Diane Ruggiero – Superintendent of the Cultural Arts with COA is presenting a report on the results of the Public Art Board jury of bus wrap artists’ entries.
 - Francesca Valini – attended in support of the transit system
 - Each member of the staff introduced themselves

- Each member of the TC introduced themselves.
- Hanna stated that the TC Council Liaison, Gordon Smith, can not attend the TC meetings. She proposed to look at the schedule now that the TC has new members and liaison to make sure it is convenient for every body. This discussion will take place under New Business.

Presentations:

Public Art Update on Bus Wrap Winners:

Diane Ruggiero updated attendees of the results of the Public Art Board artist finalists and backup finalists. Diane briefly updated everyone on the procedure of the decisions. The jury was composed of 5 members: 3 jury members with artist backgrounds; 2 jury members and Hanna Raskin and Mark Opperman, an Asheville Transit driver were the other members. The jury worked for hours to view 60 images of 30 artist entries, in which the artists also attended. Diane thanked and appreciated the feedback from all members of jury and artists. Diane presented a PowerPoint Presentation of the 3 finalists and the 3 backup artists artwork.

Ambassador Program Policy:

Martha McGlohon announced that she is attending the TC meeting to answer questions of noted concerns and suggest revisions to the Ambassador Program Policy, particularly about City liability. If a volunteer is assaulted, who is responsible? Paul asked Martha why the volunteers are appointed only twice. Martha mentioned that it is the same for the Boards and Commission which is twice appointed for three years. Hanna mentioned that this is a different concept with approximately 20 volunteers.

Martha suggested a background check for criminal activity of the volunteers. Hanna asked why the volunteers should have a comprehensive health plan. Hanna indicated that she does not have a health plan. Martha mentioned that Hanna is not a risk factor since she is not a volunteer, at this time. Paul mentioned that he would like to participate, but does not have a health plan. Martha reiterated that this is only a suggestion. That Risk Management would be in agreement with the Ambassador Program Policy as proposed, if there is no compensation.

Hanna mentioned that she researched other programs in NC and a health plan was not mandatory in Durham and the Triangle. Steve Eggett asked if drafting a Liability Waiver would hold in court. Martha said that in the event of an accident the court will not consider the waiver. Martha continued that with this policy/program, revisions will be made to the policy; there will be budget issues to discuss; and final Council approval. Martha suggested having the TC volunteer first. Hanna suggested taking this issue up at the 4/14/10 retreat. Martha stated that she will check with Durham to see how this program has worked. Ken suggested that COA has volunteers for patrolling for handicap parking violations, but not on city property.

Paul disagreed on the health issue; Martha will ask Risk Management to look at this issue and request volunteers to sign a liability waiver and Risk Management to weigh in on possible risk to COA. Paul said that the Ambassador Program is worth doing, but volunteers should not have violent records. Martha asked if Durham has automated system of departures. This would be a big part of having the Ambassador Program. Hanna announced that this would be a subject to discuss further at the 4/14/10 retreat.

Presentation by Brett McCall on GPS/GLYMPSE:

Brett asked the one question that is asked continually "Where is my bus?" With technology of today of broadcasting real time, this question could be answered. GLYMPSE could be mounted on each bus and powered by a battery. The transit website would be modified with route listings and riders who would click on the respective route. Brett volunteered to make phone calls at the grassroots level as pilot program to vendors at the Asheville Mall during the 60 days of trial with Verizon.

Paul summarized that the cost of \$450 for the equipment and website + \$120 for the phone, using one bus for one month. Ken stated that the City has rules to follow which is mandated by State law. The concept is wonderful and the ultimate goal is similar to the trucking GPS system. He sees that GLYMPSE would be useful in attracting choice riders. Ken suggests if TC likes the concept would direct the staff to research and proceed with following the RFP process with budgetary implications which would require Council endorsement. The discussion continued among TC members, staff and community participants. Brett stated that he will work with TC and staff to a solution.

Ken mentioned that: 1. Brett had done the background work that will accomplish the goal that could be structured for an RFP; Hanna asked if we could have citizen advocacy committee. Ken stated that we need to follow the rules but not squelch what Brett has done so far. Mariate stated that the staff is looking for funding for the AVL system. There are other companies that have more benefits that produce information for operations and records, speed limits, etc. Mariate continued to say that the staff has asked for funding, and continues to seek it, but so far without success. Mariate mentioned that it would take 3 months to develop a proposal. Ken suggests the staff contact Purchasing to get their feeling of the matter and report at the March meeting. Hanna asked if TC supports the concept - Paul said yes. Hanna moved to ask staff to further proceed with RFP process regarding vehicle locator project. Paul seconded the motion and all were in favor.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Strive Not to Drive (SNTD) week.** Hanna announced that SNTD is in May 17-21, 2010. TC members played a role last year, including, Transit 101 and \$0.25 cent fares on Friday. Hanna mentioned that she is not interested in the \$0.25 cent fares. Mariate said that she has permission to have the \$0.25 cent fares again through Fees and Charges. Fees and Charges will meet again in November to decide what days to have special fees. Paul asked if Kathy Molin will have STND promotional items to hand out. Mariate answered that Kathy will have items to hand out. Hanna suggested distributing bus passes during SNTD week. Mariate stated that TC can ask for bus passes at the next Fees and Charges meeting. Hanna moved to obtain passes in Fees and Charges at November, 2010 session. Paul seconded the motion and all were in favor. Paul suggested foregoing the \$0.25 cent fare day and due to budgetary constraints and because a lot of passengers have bus passes. Hanna asked if there are other programs to add to SNTD. Kevin mentioned that regular riders could spread the word to others that do not ride the bus. Hanna announced of a multi-modal happy hour 5 to 7 p.m. which has been cleared by SNTD. There will be maps, greenway information. Hanna is requesting more TC volunteers for SNTD week.
- **City Council Presentation:** Hanna announced that City Council invited a 10 minute presentation by TC chairman to review TC mission and work structure on May 18, 2010.
- **Request to change TC time:** Councilman Gordon Smith, newly appointed TC Liaison, has requested the TC meeting times be moved to accommodate his availability as follows: Tuesday 1 p.m. or later; 2nd Monday between 9-11 a.m.; 2nd Thursday between 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Paul would like to see Councilman Smith attend TC meetings, but cannot support change, unless it is in the evening and not during a work day. Dave mentioned that it would be hard for him to have a mid-day meeting. Hanna mentioned that 4:30 p.m. is better for TC people who have to take the bus. It was decided by TC that the meetings will remain at 4:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Annual Report:** Attached to the agenda for TC review and submit to Council.
- **TC Retreat Planning:** Hanna announced TC retreat on April 14, 2010 at the Asheville Design Center from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mariate mentioned that she is working on the logistics. Hanna announced that the agenda for the April retreat will be set at the March meeting.
- **TC Presentation Schedule:** Health Department; Geri Solomon on the International Community Outreach; and Shannon Tuch of Planning Department.
- **International Community Outreach:** Geri Solomon performed a survey project and will present to TC at March TC meeting.
- **Review of Current Lobbying Efforts:** Paul announced that TC should make sure that City Council hears the Transit Commission's views of proper funding for ATS regarding the new sales taxes to be paid at vehicle registration. To lobby for a marketing budget since marketing has improved ridership in other cities.

STAFF UPDATES:

- **Transit Master Plan (TMP) Implementation Plan:** Mariate announced that the TMP Implementation Plan will be presented to Council on 3/9/10. The areas to be considered for approval by Council are:

Marketing; On Time Performance; 30-Minute Frequency. Will also discuss the system wide option for Council to consider.

- **New Fareboxes:** The installations of the fareboxes are complete and in operation along with new passes that will arrive for March.
- **New Buses:** Edna announced that the City will be issuing purchase orders for five (5) 35ft Diesel Gillig. These buses are being purchased off of a North Carolina Consortium bid issued by Wave Transit in Wilmington, North Carolina which the City of Asheville was a part of.
- **Budget:** Mariate mentioned that there is no news at this time on the budget. Council has a work session in March and will know by that time.
- **Consolidation Study:** Mariate announced that the consolidation study reporting will take approximately 2 to 3 months to complete. Interviews are being performed by a consultant on riders and stakeholders and council members. Hendersonville is not very interested to participate in the consolidation study.
- **Ridership:** Mariate stated that the winter months have lower ridership. She observed this year was lower than other years. February was better than January, 2008. Due to the newly installed fareboxes, there will be a more accurate accounting of ridership. Yuri stated that CDBG is funding 5 shelters, 4 Top-A-Stops and 5 trash cans. Edna and Yuri are working on the new maps; phone messaging will be operational soon.

Announcements:

- Paul brought to staff's attention of not having a pedestrian access on Routes 28/29 at Moffitt Hill Branch Rd.
- Natalie Murdock – announcing that MPO is accepting applications for membership in MPO citizen Advisory Committee. Referred everyone to the website for details.

Presentations:

- Shannon Tuch – Planning Department
- Health Department representative
- Geri Solomon – International Community

March Agenda:

- Mariate – GLYMPSE
- Agenda for TC Retreat on April 14, 2010

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm

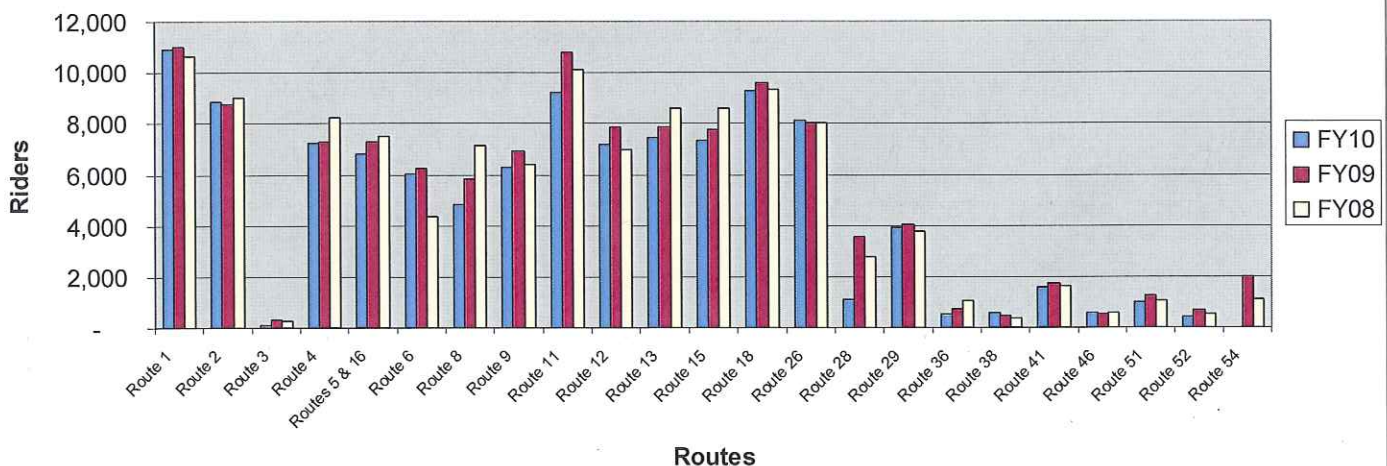
Route Ridership February, 2010

February

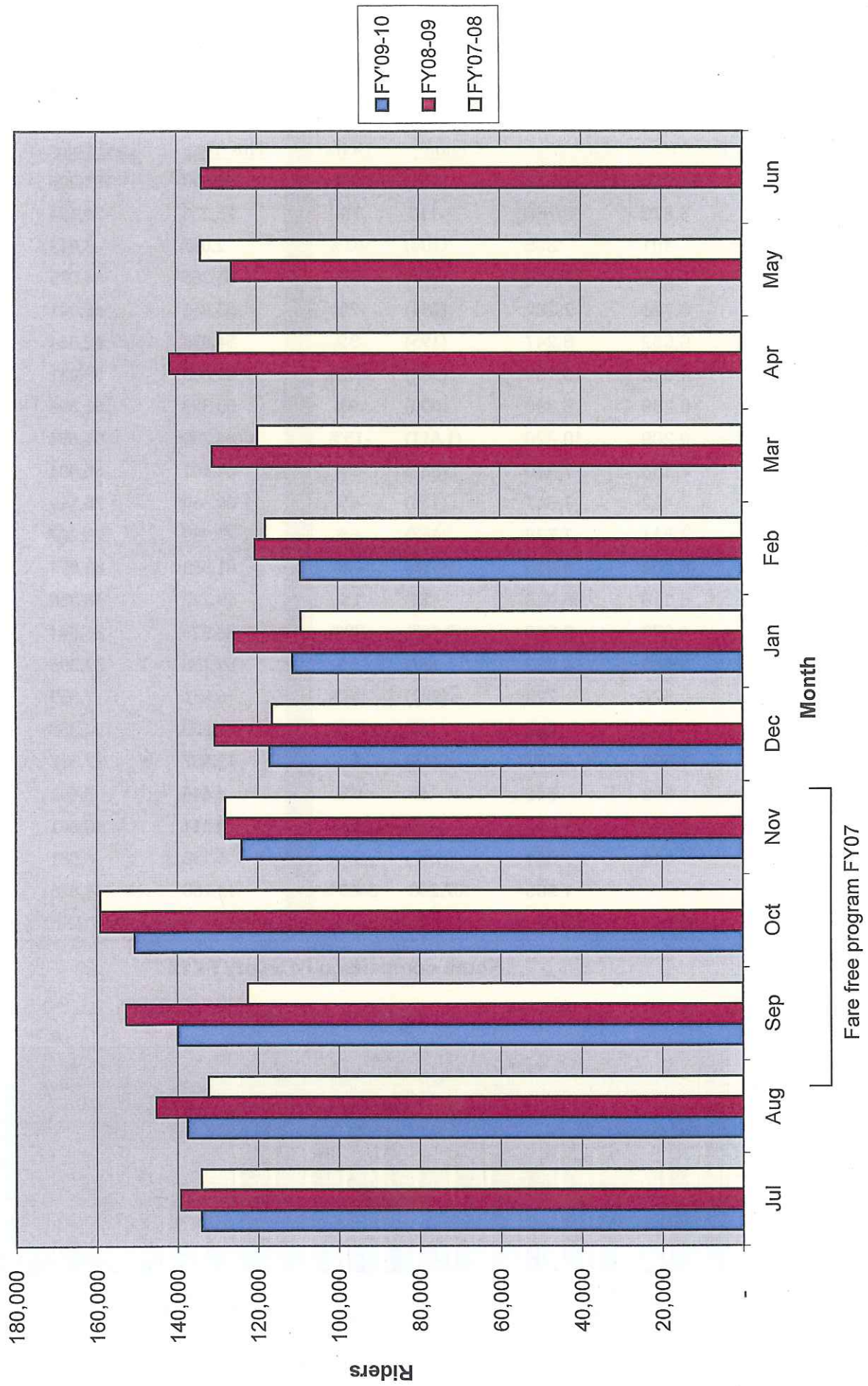
Fiscal Year to Date

Route	2010	2009	Change	Delta	This Year	Last Year	Change	Delta
	<u>This Year</u>	<u>Last Year</u>						
1	10,905	11,026	(121)	-1%	94,995	101,206	(6,211)	-6%
2	8,879	8,769	110	1%	75,236	79,194	(3,958)	-5%
3	101	305	(204)	-67%	2,037	3,013	(976)	-32%
4	7,212	7,279	(67)	-1%	65,265	64,025	1,240	2%
5 & 16	6,798	7,282	(484)	-7%	63,961	65,941	(1,980)	-3%
6	6,052	6,247	(195)	-3%	54,834	62,364	(7,530)	-12%
8	4,812	5,799	(987)	-17%	49,048	58,451	(9,403)	-16%
9	6,289	6,898	(609)	-9%	55,378	61,398	(6,020)	-10%
11	9,209	10,820	(1,611)	-15%	84,739	91,694	(6,955)	-8%
12	7,153	7,840	(687)	-9%	64,801	68,904	(4,103)	-6%
13	7,422	7,847	(425)	-5%	69,360	75,169	(5,809)	-8%
15	7,311	7,778	(467)	-6%	75,989	73,207	2,782	4%
18	9,258	9,575	(317)	-3%	81,553	83,077	(1,524)	-2%
26	8,119	8,038	81	1%	69,722	68,930	792	1%
28	1,078	3,540	(2,462)	-70%	28,625	36,844	(8,219)	-22%
29	3,946	4,033	(87)	-2%	39,256	37,306	1,950	5%
36	527	729	(202)	-28%	6,631	7,859	(1,228)	-16%
38	562	496	66	13%	5,250	4,338	912	21%
41	1,592	1,737	(145)	-8%	15,887	17,317	(1,430)	-8%
46	593	546	47	9%	4,648	5,462	(814)	-15%
51	1,019	1,252	(233)	-19%	9,441	10,301	(860)	-8%
52	414	661	(247)	-37%	5,158	6,581	(1,423)	-22%
54		1,983	107,268	5409%	13,280	18,856	(5,576)	-30%
Total	109,251	120,480	(11,229)	-9%				

Route comparison February FY10



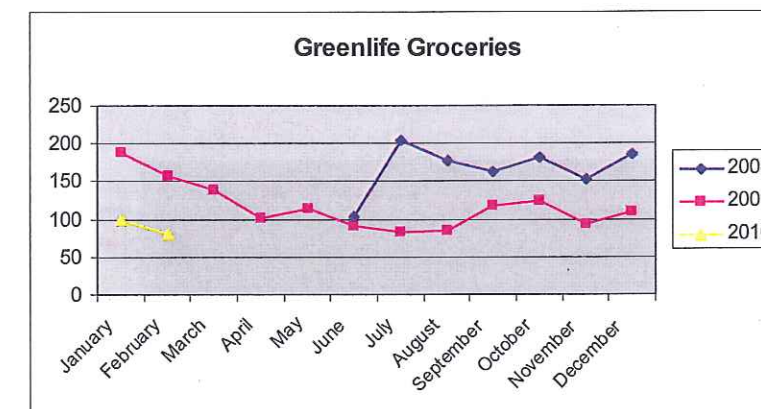
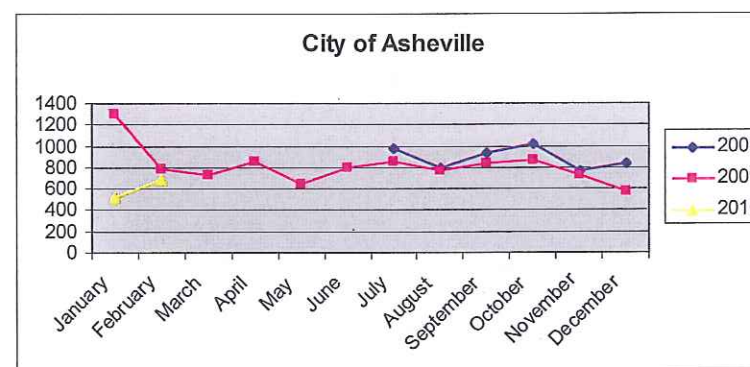
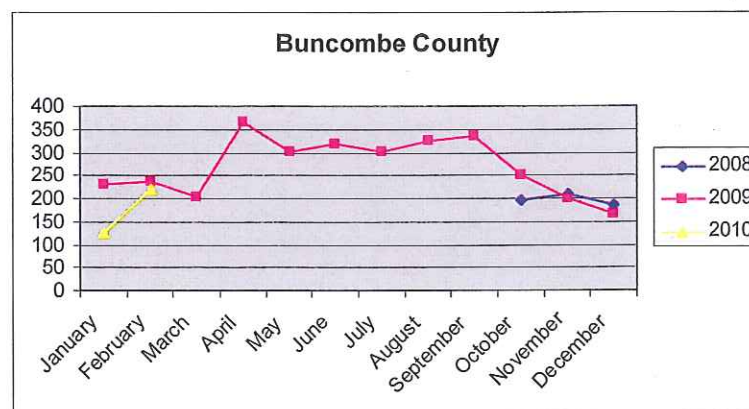
Ridership Comparison



Buncombe County			
	2008	2009	2010
January		231	127
February		236	222
March		204	
April		366	
May		302	
June		319	
July		301	
August		324	
September		334	
October	195	251	
November	209	199	
December	187	165	
Year Totals	591	3232	349
Overall Totals	4172		

City of Asheville			
	2008	2009	2010
January		1306	515
February		779	688
March		733	
April		850	
May		643	
June		793	
July	976	857	
August	797	774	
September	940	844	
October	1018	873	
November	770	735	
December	835	575	
Year Totals	5336	9762	1203
Overall Totals	16301		

Greenlife			
	2008	2009	2010
January		188	100
February		156	80
March		138	
April		101	
May		113	
June	103	90	
July	205	82	
August	177	84	
September	164	117	
October	181	125	
November	152	93	
December	185	109	
Year Totals	1167	1396	180
Overall Totals	2743		



Grove Park Inn				
	2007	2008	2009	2010
January		1993	1592	913
February		2156	1198	1119
March		2225	1305	
April		2128	1386	
May		2356	1366	
June		2298	1509	
July		2520	1345	
August		2494	1387	
September		2659	1376	
October		2552	1410	
November	1268	1863	1042	
December	1969	1676	1167	
Year Totals	3237	26920	16083	2032
Overall Totals	48272			

UNCA					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
January		2433	3140	4777	2020
February		2860	4041	4562	3227
March		3536	3346	3554	
April		3163	3906	3891	
May		2010	2870	1803	
June		1529	2882	1253	
July		1816	2692	1677	
August		3611	5336	3118	
September		4512	6755	3897	
October		4881	6169	3935	
November	1285	3452	4444	3234	
December	1754	2443	3649	2124	
Year Totals	3039	36246	49230	37825	5247
Overall Totals	131587				

